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ABSTRACT

This course supplies an historical overview of forces and factors which have led to changes in African educational philosophy and planning. Most landmarks in African education have been established by some important international conferences on education (held in developing nations), a number of which are discussed in the course. The course is divided into the following sections: (1) objectives of the course; (2) the post-second world war social revolution; (3) the focus of educational development in Africa since the Addis Ababa Conference of 1961; (4) dysfunctionality of the school system; (5) developments in the late 1960's; (6) developments in the 1970's; and (7) the trend of educational development from the 1970's. Concluding remarks offer reflections on the purpose, objectives, quality, and relevance of education in Africa. References for further reading are included. (JD)

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African Curriculum Organisation (ACO)

Basic Training Course in Systematic Curriculum Development

Course One:

General Background to Curriculum Development in Africa

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
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ACO BASIC TRAINING COURSE IN SYSTEMATIC CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

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COURSE ONE: GENERAL BACKGROUND TO CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

THE PROCESS OF CHANGE IN HISTORICAL LANDMARKS

In this course you will take a look at and examine the forces and factors which have led to changes in African educational philosophy and planning. Most of the landmarks in African education have been laid by some important international conferences a number of which we discuss in this course. Some of these major conferences are the following:

1961 - The Addis Ababa Conference

1962 - The Tananarive Conference on Higher Education in Africa

1964 - Conference of Ministers of Education - Paris

1966 - International Meeting of Experts - Moscow

1967 - International Conference on the World Crisis in Education (Williamsburg - Virginia)

1968 - (i) I.I.E.P. Meeting of Experts - Paris

(ii) Conference of Ministers on the Role of Science and Technology in Development in Africa, Nairobi (CASTAFRICA)

1970 - The United Nations General Assembly - declaration of the INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF EDUCATION - 1970

- The Edgar Faure Commission - "Learning To Be"

1974 - Conference of Ministers of Education on the Role of Science and Technology in Development in Africa - Dakar, Senegal (CASTAFRICA II)

1976 - Conference of Ministers of Education in Africa (MINEDAF - Lagos) Statement of Aims and objectives of Education in Africa.

This course touches on all the above conferences as well as other conferences and meetings which have had significant impact on the development of education in Africa. At the end of the course the student should be able to explain the themes of these major conferences which have dealt with African education and reason out the resultant recommendations of the conferences in terms of educational development in the students' own country and in Africa in general.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS COURSE

It is hoped to that at the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Analyse the historical development of educational thought and practice in Africa since the emergence of the African independence movement.

2. Explain the factors which have influenced African educational development since 1961.

3. Critically examine the current issues involved in the planning for quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement and the methods for ensuring relevance of education.

4. Analyse a number of cases to determine how political, social, economic, and cultural factors influence the development of National education philosophies and implementation of educational programmes.

5. Analyse and synthesise the problems and constraints inhibiting the realization of national educational objectives.

6. Examine the role of regional, sub-regional, and international co-operation and the implications on educational policy, management and implementation.

7. Analyse and synthesise the relevant programmes that have been made in his country for the promotion of life-long education.

8. Discuss the structure and organization of non-formal education systems in Africa and in his country.

9. Discuss the problems and benefits of making environmental education part of the curriculum for primary and secondary schools.

10. Discuss the efforts that have been made in this country to link education and the world of work.

11. Critically examine the wastage in education that has arisen as a result of the quantitative expansion of education, socio-economic problems, and the lack of job opportunities for school leavers.

12. Examine the current issues in the development of adult education programmes.

13. Discuss the system for educational material production and procurement in his country.

THE POST SECOND WORLD WAR SOCIAL REVOLUTION

The end of the Second World War marked the beginning of a great social revolution throughout the world. In many commonly referred to as the "developing countries", the emergence of nationalist movements created political awareness among the masses of their rights to self-determination as well as an awareness of the important role which education plays in socio-economic development. The Second-World War provides a clear illustration of the effects of social change on the development of education the world over and particularly in Africa and the other countries of the Third World. In Africa at the end of the Second World War, "a large band of African soldiers and porters returned. They had learned much about European life and gained a much clearer understanding of what they wanted both for themselves as individuals and for the African people as a whole". Thus in Africa and in the rest of the Third World occurred what Professor Harbison has described as "The Revolution of Rising Expectations". This revolution was to continue in the 1950's throughout the Third world.

The familiarity which African soldiers and other groups of African scholars had gained about the conditions of life in Europe made them question the conditions of life in Africa. The idea then grew that economic and social development depended very much on the educational level of a people. Wrote Phillips Combs:

> "Since the 1950's..... a world of people, previously immobilized, got hold of a liberating idea: that knowledge is the key to a whole family of powers - political, social, economic; that a monopoly of knowledge in the hands of the few is but another name for the rule of the few over the lives of the many, that any people who wish to be the authors of their own history and to develop in their own way

> must break up the existing monopoly of knowledge. They must make the right of access to education the common property of everyone and, by extension, must also democratize the right of access to progressively higher levels of education (1968, p.9)".

The emerging political and educational consciousness was not only limited to Africa. It became a growing consciousness throughout the third world. In Africa however the Addis Ababa conference of 1961 gave formal expression to the educational consciousness that had began after the Second World War.

During the 1960's UNESCO Regional Conferences held in different parts of the world adopted plans for the development of education. The following are some of the various plans adopted at the regional conferences:

1. The Karachi Plan for Asian Education adopted in January 1960.

2. The Arab States Education programme adopted in Beirut in March 1960.

3. The Bellagio Projections for Europe and North America adopted in July 1960.

4. The Addis Ababa Plan for African Education adopted in May 1961.

5. The Santiago Plan for Latin American education adopted in March 1962.

The Asian Conference adopted the Karachi Plan for Universal Primary Education for all Asian children by 1980. The other regional conferences of the Arab States, Latin America and Africa, followed the example of Asia making Univeral Primary

Education (UPE) the educational goal of the developing countries. The regional objectives set up at these conferences provided for the attainment of Universal Primary Education in 1980 or in exceptional cases in 1983, with the help of large amounts of external aid.

THE FOCUS OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA SINCE THE ADDIS ABABA CONFERENCE OF 1961

In May 1961, at the dawn of political independence of most African countries, delegates of thirty-nine African states and five European colonial powers (Belgium, France, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom), met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to discuss education in Africa. This conference was a turning point in the development of education in Africa. It was this conference which gave formal expression to the educational consciousness that had began after the Second World War. It was the first time in Africa that the Education of Africans was discussed essentially by Africans at the continental level. The conference was important because the targets that were set by it, have for many years become the yardstick for measuring the achievement (in quantitative terms) of educational development in African countries.

The Addis Ababa "Conference of African states on the Development of Education in Africa" addressed itself to the problem of planning education in relation to economic and social development. The conference drew up two types of plans, a short-term plan covering the period 1960-1965, and a twenty-year long-term plan covering 1960 to 1980.

The short-term plan focussed on three main issues:

1. The expansion of secondary school education to raise secondary school enrolment which in 1961 constituted only three percent of the secondary school age population in middle-Africa.

2. A change in the school curriculum to conform to development needs. Expansion of teacher training facilities especially for elementary and secondary schools.

3. The objective of the short-term plan was to plan the educational system to meet manpower needs. The objective of the long-term plan was to raise enrolment ratios of elementary schools, secondary schools and universities which stood at 40:3.0:0.2 in 1961 to 100:23:2.1 by 1980 as indicated in the projected figures in the table below:

LONG-TERM PLAN (1961-1980) ENROLMENT AND EQUIVALENT PERCENTAGES

Educational Level	1961-62	1965-66	1970-71	1980-81
	Enrolments (in thousands)			
Primary	11,586.0	15,279.0	20,378.0	32,808.0
Second-Level	903.7	1,833.5	3,390.0	5,905.4
Higher	25.5	30.3	55.0	328.0
	Percentage of age group enrolled			
Primary	40	51	71	100
Second level	3	9	15	23
Higher	0.2	0.2	0.4	2

Source: Final Report: Conference of African States on the the Development of Education in Africa, Unesco, 1961.

The inventory of educational needs that were established by the conference included the need for adult education, the need for stepping up the education of girls who constituted only 30 percent of primary school enrolment and 22 percent of secondary school enrolment, the need for the development of higher education geared to the production of high-level manpower, the need for teachers at all levels of the educational system, and the need for curriculum reform. On the basis of these needs the educational structure that was envisaged to have been attained by 1980 called for a six year free and compulsory primary education in order that 100 percent enrolment would be achieved by 1980.

Secondary education was planned to consist of two stages: junior secondary school and senior secondary school, each of which would be of three years duration. Junior secondary education would be given in three areas: an academic stream, a vocational technical stream, and a teacher training stream. Thirty percent of all primary school leavers would be offered places in the junior secondary schools. Of this percentage it was expected that 10 percent would be enrolled in general academic education. This group would persue a six year academic programme from junior secondary through senior secondary school. The remaining 20 percent would enter vocational technical schools and teacher training colleges. About 3.3 percent of all students who enter the latter schools would have the chance for further training at the senior secondary level. It was thus estimated that 13.3 percent of all primary school leavers would receive both junior and senior secondary school education and that about 20 percent of this group or 2.3 of the 18 -19 age group, would be selected for 'A' level work followed by three years of University Education.

A further strong point of the plan was its emphasis that at least 45 percent of all teachers should have had twelve years of basic education followed by three years of teacher training, and that at least 45 percent of the rest should have the equivalent of nine years basic education and three years of professional training. The first group would be responsible for junior secondary school teaching while the second group would teach in the primary schools.

The immediate consequence of the Addis Ababa conference decisions was a rapid expansion of the educational systems in all African countries, at the primary, secondary and higher levels to meet the demand for educated and trained man-power at all levels for the rapidly expanding economic and social institutions that were created after the attainment of political independence. Besides this, there was the compelling political necessity to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people who wanted schools for their children since they regarded education as the key to progress and social advancement.

A summary of six major factors that contributed to the spectacular results achieved in educational expansion are as follows:

(1) The need for educated and trained manpower at all levels for the rapidly expanding economic and social institutions that were created after the attainment of political independence.

(2) The compelling political necessity to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people who wanted schools for their children since they regarded education as the key to progress and social advancement.

(3) The sense of international solidarity and the framework of international co-operation which made available a substantial (although still inadequate) amount of external resources for the purpose of educational development in Africa. At the same time, inter-African cooperation with its expression in the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (O.A.U.) was considerably strengthened.

(4) The Addis Ababa Conference accepted the concept of "education as a productive investment" and as a major factor of economic, social and technological development. This factor explains why educational development has come to be almost equated with educational planning, which in turn is closely related to overall economic planning. To help African countries to plan their educational systems, UNESCO established a Regional Group for Educational Planning and Administration in Africa (1962-1968) which was later expanded to become the UNESCO Regional Centre for Educational Planning and Administration in Africa (1968-70). In 1970, as a result of UNESCO's decentralization policy, the Centre became the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Africa, based at Dakar, Senegal.

(5) Educational Planning, pursuant to the recommendations of the Addis Ababa Conference, gained full acceptance in Africa. As the Director General of UNESCO pointed out in his speech at the 1968 Nairobi Conference on Education and Scientific and Technical Training in Relation to Development in Africa, "Educational Planning is not the effect of a passing infatuation with a new idea, but results from the clear recognition that it meets the need to bring educational systems up to maximum efficiency

while, at the same time ensuring the balanced development of the individual".

(6) The realization that education is no longer a privilege of the few but a fundamental right of all the people, and that the guarantee for such a right is compulsory free primary education and equal opportunities for access to higher levels of education.

DYSFUNCTIONALITY OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

There is no doubt that the rapid linear expansion of the school system fulfilled a vital function - the provision of trained manpower necessary to sustain the imperatives of political independence and nation-building but, with the passing of the years, it became evident that much of the expansion was mis-directed. The Addis Ababa conference noted that:

> "the present content of education in Africa is not in line with either existing African conditions, the postulate of political independence, the dominant features of an essentially technological age, or the imperatives of balanced economic development involving rapid industrialization, but is based on a non-African background, allowing no room for the African child's intelligence, powers of observation, and creative imagination to develop freely and help him find his bearings in the world....." and recommended,
>
> "that African educational authorities should revise and reform the content of education in the areas of the curricula, text books and methods, so as to take account of African environment, child development, cultural heritage and the demands of technological progress and economic development, especially industrialization."

In the anxiety to expand the educational systems inherited from the colonial era as rapidly as possible in the "Romantic Sixties" very little was done to implement the above important resolution of the Addis Ababa conference. Clarence Beeby in his book The Quality of Education in Developing Countries, states that within the process of educational expansion the important issues of the relevance and quality of education were ignored in Africa and the rest of the developing world. He writes:

> "The passionate desire of common men and women to give their own children a better chance in life gave the demand for education its explosive quality and made it a political force that no democratic government could long resist. Since many of the parents were themselves illiterate, the pressure was for more education rather than better education and it was too much to expect them to be very concerned whether their demand for more primary schools represented the best use that could be made of the country's meagre funds for education. Nor can they have been prepared for the educational inflation that rendered graduation from primary school, by the time their children achieved it, no longer sufficient to buy the white-collar jobs for which they had sought it....."
> (Beeby 1966, p.9).

The rapid growth of the educational system has created a situation in many African countries whereby massive unemployment and underemployment of school-leavers with an inadequate and irrelevant education co-exist with a critical demand for a skilled labour force to meet development needs. The employment crisis is the result of a mismatch between an educational strategy aiming mainly at quantitative expansion of the academic streams and an economic sector has been unable to absorb a great majority of school leavers.

The problem of the unemployed school-leaver has not been the only cause for concern. The rapid expansion of the educational system entailed high scholarisation particularly at the primary level. At the follow-up "Conference on Education and Science and Technical Training in Relation to Development in Africa" held in Nairobi in July 1968, it was noted that the enrolments in secondary schools and universities were going according to the planned figures of 1961. The problem however was with the primary schools which were experiencing a high average drop-out rate of 68 percent far in excess of the anticipated 41 percent drop-out rate. It was obvious then that high scholarisation did not necessarily mean high retention rates in the school system. The excessive wastage rates, associated with certain short-comings of the education systems and particularly the unsuitable nature of the educational content, entailed such high unit costs that further quantitative expansion often appeared to be out of the question. To put it more accurately, it became clear that quantitative expansion could not be sustained without prior qualitative improvement and educational reform.

The universal primary education which had been instituted by a majority of countries in Africa was aimed at ensuring equality of opportunity for all children with regard to access to schools. In many countries access to school has not meant the same educational opportunities for boys and girls or for all the people in the society. Besides the problem of wastage two other problems hindering quantitative expansion of education are:

1. The problem of disparity in educational opportunities and attainment between different geographical areas of the same country, or between different ethnic groups in the same country. Inadequate provision of educational facilities

e.g. primary schools not offering a full primary school programme or the complete lack of primary or secondary schools in some areas.

2. The problem of children not going to school because of the inability of their parents, due to poverty, to pay for their education; children going to school but dropping out for one reason or another, without completing the course.

Furthermore, in spite of the rapid expansion of the educational system and the large expenditure entailed, the Nairobi Conference on Education and Scientific and Technical Training in Relation to Development in Africa (1968) had recognized that the majority of the African countries had not reached the targets fixed at the continental level for the period of the Addis Ababa short-term plan (1961-1965) and, in particular, that for many of them free and universal primary education in 1980 did not appear to be a likely prospect. The review and discussion of the situation by the conference revealed that probably the major factor hindering rapid educational expansion was to be found in the high rates of wastage. The conference noted that:
"The enormous wastage at the primary school level is measured by the fact that for the continent as a whole, only 32 percent of pupils enrolled in the first year complete their first year".

Further problems affecting the prospects for attaining universal primary education in the region are, firstly, Africa's high rate of population growth, which means that the heavy task of meeting the backlog has to be accomplished at the same time that a large number of new places have to be found. Between 1970 and 1975 the African population was expected by the United Nations to grow at 2.8 percent. Secondly, the educational backlog is higher than in any other region since it was the last of the world's great regions to embark on the development process.

Continued social pressure for more educational opportunities, coupled with financial constraints and population growth which have checked the progress made in reducing the number of illiterates, have made it necessary for policy-makers to look beyond the formal school system for alternative means of providing education. The need for such alternative means of educating the youth and adults in particular who had not the benefit of education has become imperative.

These problems account for the uneasy feeling of disillusion with education which set in at the end of the 1960's quite in contrast to the high hopes with which the decade began. At the time of the Addis Ababa Conference of 1961, institutionalized schooling for children and young people was assumed to be a broad highway to national prosperity and international well-being. By 1968, when the Nairobi Conference took stock of progress, the realization had dawned that the Addis Ababa enrolment targets were unrealistic when set against limited resources and exploding populations. It had also become obvious that quantitative expansion of education, if it could be realized at all, was an inadequate measure of educational growth and development, that, to be of value attention needs to be paid to the quality of education offered in the schools. By the end of the 1960's national policy-makers had hence began to look towards <u>quality</u> and <u>relevance</u> in education rather than simple quantitative targets.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE LATE 1960'S

The Moscow Meeting of Experts (1968)

In seeking to define "quality" and "relevance" in the late 1960's fresh appraisals were made of the institutional structures of education and the means by which they were administered and controlled. For the first time since mass schooling spread across the world in the nineteenth century, the concept of the school itself was called into question and alternative means of providing education were explored. One of the first international meetings which addressed itself to qualitative issues in education was the Meeting of Experts on the Curriculum of General Education held in Moscow in January 1968. The meeting was attended by 33 experts from 22 countries.

Four major proposals were made by the meeting. These were as follows:

1. National Centres for Curriculum Development and Research: The meeting noted that curriculum development is a complex process requiring trained people to develop specifications, learning materials, evaluation procedures and research systems. Effective curricula are developed only where the nation has a curriculum centre manned by teams of experts. The meeting therefore called on UNESCO to help Member States in setting up national curriculum centres to speed up the process of curriculum development, research, and training.

2. Exchange of Experience: The process of curriculum development, the meeting noted, was well known in theory. What was needed then was the practice of curriculum

development in Member States. The meeting therefore called upon UNESCO to organize training sessions of one month or more, where national teams would be invited for training and exchange of ideas and experience.

3. Assistance in Curriculum Development and Evaluation: The meeting further recommended frequent international, regional, and national meetings of curriculum experts to assist in the evaluation and development of curricula.

4. Training of Specialists in Curriculum Development: The meeting lastly recommended that "assistance be given to countries to establish or expand the systematic training of educational specialists in the field of curriculum development, and, when advisable, to assist groups of countries having similar problems in the organization of regional courses for this purpose".

As a result of the recommendations of the meeting other international meetings were held to give particular attention to curriculum development and other issues related to improving the qualitative aspects of education.

The Nairobi Conference (1968)

At the Conference on Education and Scientific and Technical Training in Relation to Development in Africa, held at Nairobi, Kenya, from 16 to 27 July, 1968, the Ministers noted that despite a decade of determined and considerable financial commitments made since the Addis Ababa Conference by African States to develop their educational systems, and despite the significant progress achieved, in the majority of African countries the results so far still fell far short of those expected at the first half of the Development Decade launched by the United

Nations in 1960. For this and other reasons the conference mainly focused its attention on the issues of Educational Planning and the training of educational planners and managers especially in relation to primary education. The conference started by examining the problems and needs of planning education in relation to both educational development and general development. It examined the methods and objectives of educational planning and the ways and means of implementing educational plans. The conference stated that "planning must.....be a continuous, integrated flexible process, particularly concerned with obtaining education of the highest quality and the highest efficiency". It pointed out that planning should emphasize the structures, methods and content of education just as it has emphasized the quantitative aspects in the past. It further stated that planning should be decentralized and should be done at the local, regional, and national levels.

Two important recommendations made by the conference were as follows:

1. that particular attention be given, during the Second Development Decade, to increasing the qualitative and quantitative output of both school and out-of-school education, according to the requirements and the trend of economic and social development; and the efficient functioning of the ducational system, in particular by reducing repeating and drop-outs.

2. that, to this end, the needs and aspirations of a changing society be reflected in a constantly improved curriculum; that new methods be employed to promote individual development; and that new structures be provided for

life-long education and for administraiton and management involving the participation of all concerned.

To these ends, and with particular reference to primary education the conference invited African governments:

1. to ensure that the primary education systems of African countries, in ways varying from country to country:

   (a) achieve as soon as possible the 100% school enrolment at primary level which was scheduled for 1980 in the Addis Ababa Plan and which is in conformity with the right to education and which is also in conformity with the desire of education shown by the peoples of Africa and the democratization willed by the governments,

   (b) contribute to the strengthening of national unity,

   (c) bring out the social and cultural integration of children,

   (d) act as factors of change in economic and social development.

2. to that end, to reform the content and orientation of primary education with a view to ensuring that:

   (a) the risk of child being uprooted is reduced to the minimum,

   (b) the aim of the primary school is not only learning but preparation for life as well,

(c) the primary education inculcates in the child respect and taste for manual work,

(d) requisite attention is given to the possibility of using using the national languages as languages of instruction and determining the optimum age and the most effective methods for teaching the first language of wide communication,

(e) primary education, in both rural and urban areas provides all the children with the same basic knowledge and offers them the same chances of continuing their education.

3. to improve the output of the primary education systems, in particular by reducing the enrolment wastage rates,

4. to provide for the continuous in-service training of teachers,

5. to create rural-orientated primary teacher training institutions,

6. to reform the structures of primary education and post-primary education in accordance with the new objectives assigned to primary education,

7. to introduce adult measures and the different educational activities which are needed to supplement the expansion and reform of primary education as part of the rural and, more generally, social and economic development,

8. to make the necessary provisions for integrating primary school leavers in society.

9. to bring the school closer to the community and the community closer to the school,

10. to improve rural living conditions and to raise the prestige of the farmer, in order to prevent the school from accelerating the trend towards a rural exodus,

11. to encourage greater co-ordination between the work of educational planners and of those responsible for economic development.

Similar views and recommendations especially related to educational planning and international cooperation were made by the International Conference on Educational Planning which met in Paris in August 1968. The Nairobi Conference however also accepted the proposals for the establishment of Centres of Excellence made by the OAU at its ninth session in September 1967. The idea of the Centres of Excellence was to develop specialized education programmes in some African Universities to undertake research and offer post-graduate training in areas of critical importance to high-level manpower needs. While the OAU emphasized excellence in science and technology (Geology, Climatology, Water Resource Planning, Human Medicine and Pharmacology, Food science and technology, Applied science and technology, Marine Science and technology), the Nairobi conference drew attention to the need for excellence in the social sciences and humanities as well. Centres of Excellence never got established. However between 1974 and 1980 UNESCO made definite proposals and arrangements for establishing a network of Institutions of Science and Technology on the lines recommended

by the Conference of Ministers of African Member States responsible for the Application of Science and Technology to Development (CASTAFRICA) in Dakar January 1974. The network is referred to as African Network of Science and Technology Institutes (ANSTI).

In January 1980 the ANSTI Secretariat was established in the Unesco Regional Office of Science and Technology for Africa in Nairobi. The objectives of ANSTI are to bring closer collaboration between Engineering, Scientific and Technological Institutions involved in post-graduate training and research in Africa. ANSTI also arranges the placement of visiting professors, organizes seminars, and offers post-graduate fellowships. So far a network involving nine engineering fields and four basic science fields has been established in a number of African Universities. The engineering fields are: Agricultural Engineering and Food Processing Technology, Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical and Electronic engineering, Energy, Mechanical Engineering, Mining and Geological Engineering and Water Resources Engineering. The four basic science fields are Chemistry, Geology (or Computer Science), Mathematics (including statistics) and Physics.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE 1970's

Curriform Reform and Training

Some of the important outcomes of the Moscow meeting of Experts in 1968, the Nairobi Conference in 1968, and the International Planning Conference in Paris also in 1968 were the increase in the awareness of the importance of curriculum development and evaluation, and the process of educational planning.

The Seminar on the Reform of the Primary School Curriculum attended by thirteen participants from twelve African countries from November 25-30, 1975 in Dakar, Senegal, and the IIEP African Regional Seminar for Advanced Training in Systematic Curriculum and Evaluation held in Achimota, Ghana (14th July to 15th August 1975) and attended by 67 participants from twelve English-speaking countries, were also the direct outcomes of the recommendations of the Moscow meeting.

African Regional Seminar for Advanced Training in Systematic Curriculum and Evaluation:

The recommendations of the International Meeting of Experts in Moscow, 1968, resulted in the International Seminar for Advanced Training in Curriculum Development and Innovation being held in Granna, Sweden, in 1971. The seminar was attended by teams from 23 countries. An important recommendation of the meeting was that there should be regular training facilities in curriculum development at the regional and international levels. This recommendation led to the formation of the International Curriculum Organization (ICO) made up of curriculum centres and institutions in 40 countries in 1973. The ICO was interested in assessing the extent of expertise in curriculum development in a number of countries as a step to developing requisite training programmes. Within the same period the International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP) in Paris was also interested in assessing the training needs in the area of curriculum planning in some selected countries. The related interest of these two international bodies culminated in the organization of the African Regional Seminar for Advanced Training in Systematic Curriculum Development and Evaluation at Achimota, Ghana, in 1975.

The seminar was organized by the IIEP in cooperation with ICO, the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA), the German Foundation for International Development (DSE), the Unesco Division of Structures and Content of Life-Long Education and the Unesco Regional Office for Education in Africa (BREDA) based at Dakar. The aim of the seminar was to provide high-level training in systematic curriculum development and evaluation for the curriculum specialist staff of twelve African countries. Areas covered by the seminar included the state of the art in curriculum theory, the social, political, and economic forces affecting curriculum development, curriculum evaluation, educational technology and curriculum development, and teacher training.

It was at this seminar that the heads of some of the curriculum centres in Africa who were present at the seminar, decided to form the African Curriculum Organization (ACO) as an association of nationally recognized curriculum centres in Africa. The ACO was formally established in September 1976.

CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF EDUCATION OF AFRICAN MEMBER STATES, LAGOS, 1976

The Fourth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education of African Member States was held in Lagos, Nigeria, from 27 January to 4 February 1976. The conference was organized by UNESCO in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The Lagos Conference was convened with the following terms of reference:

i. To review the development of education in Africa since the conference of Ministers of Education held in Nairobi in 1968.

ii. To study the present trends in education in the region and the problems raised by the renewal of education systems, giving due consideration to social, economic, and cultural development needs and in the context of life-long education.

iii. To define the problems calling for priority treatment and to establish guidelines for activities in the field of educational development and renewal, both at the level of the Member States and in the frame-work of regional and international cooperation.

The Conference had as its theme "Mass and Basic Education in Support of Development". It examined in detail, two very important issues of direct relevance to Curriculum Development in Africa, namely, problems raised by the Renovation systems and the need for Curriculum Reform in Africa. As regards problems of renovation of education in Africa, the Director-General of UNESCO, Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, in his opening speech to the general conference said, "One of the essential aims of renewal is in my opinion, to close the gap which all too often - at least until recent years - has separated education from working life and the conditions specific to the country concerned. Indeed, the search for greater "relevance" seems essential if educational systems are to function more efficiently and are to be firmly rooted in the realities of the African situation. This search should naturally - as is very often the case - involve a reform of content, one which rejects the objectives of former systems inherited from the colonial period to base itself on the political, social and cultural options of the state in question. It is a source of satisfaction therefore, to note that a great many African countries have set up institutions for the

preparation and reform of curricula - or have strengthened ones existing already - either within ministries or universities, or as independent bodies. Drawing on African traditions, as expressed in the desire for self-identification and an understanding or others, in order to intensify the sense of cultural identity, the new curricula should certainly inculcate in the child those values, attitudes and aspirations which will make him a genuine African". In this connection, it could not be over-emphasized the importance of promoting African languages as languages of instruction. The use of these languages offers obvious educational advantages, but they are also irreplacable in that "they alone can transmit a cultural heritage the integrity of which is constantly jeopardized by an often traumatic modernization."

Two conditions seem essential. Firstly, identification with a culture should go hand in hand, in the case of the African child and adolescent, with a sense of belonging to the community of the nations of the world and a desire for receptivity towards others. Secondly, the renewed esteem for African cultural values and traditions in all their richness and abundance as a way of relating with others and with the whole world, must avoid the temptation to become backward-looking. On the contrary, it should appear as one of the elements of a novel synthesis in which the most useful contributions of the past are mingled with the knowledge, values, and attitudes needed for an understanding of to-day's world and control over an often inclement environment. This of course implies much greater stress on basic training in the sciences, but it is also imperative, as part of a <u>life-long education</u> preparing the individual for his future role, that education should provide knowledge which will enable young people and adults alike to understand the machinery of national,

regional and international relations so that they may be better able to participate in the changes needed in their societies and help build a new and more just international order.

Concerning curriculum reform, the Lagos conference said that curriculum reform should lay great emphasis on actual experience, on the environment and on actual social conditions and should incorporate productive work. Children and adolescents must be freed from the feeling of unreality occasioned by the conflict between a bookish imported culture, and the exigencies of a daily life in which productive activities loom so large. In addition to its importance for economic development, this line of emphasis has an educational value and an ethical significance in that it exalts those values which are essential to the promotion of human dignity. It in any case, simply represents a return to African traditions which, until the colonial period, made no such harmful distinction between learning and everyday life.

Naturally, the quest for relevance ought not be limited to the reform of programme content. Methods and the very spirit of education and the educational atmosphere should also be adapted to the realities of Africa and to aspirations of its peoples. It would, therefore, be desirable for teachers not only to be fully qualified, but also prepared for their new role. In their function as educators of the entire community, they should live in symbiosis with it, learning from it and achieving a synthesis between cultural traditions and development requirements.

A concern for relevance in many cases also makes it necessary to revise the rules that have been followed hitherto with regard to examinations and promotion, which are in most cases too similar to those used in the systems of the former colonial powers and which, because of the successive elimination they entail, tend to

increase wastage rates to an extent which the African countries cannot afford. Moreover, they constitute an element of rigidity and formalism which permeates the very spirit of the educational system, and take no account of values, experience and skills which could well be used in many cases as criteria in assessing achievement and aptitudes. This is particularly serious in the context of an education which is designed to be life-long. The division into successive levels linked to one another springs more from an elitist outlook than from a rational organization directed towards the satisfaction of the aspirations of indiduals and the needs of society. African schools will continue to turn out hundreds of thousands of young people doomed to under-employment and unemployment so long as the various levels of schooling are not designed also to provide the skills that give access to productive employment, even though additional short courses of training may be needed in some cases.

In general, an important observation made by the Lagos Conference was that education could not be seen in isolation since the pre-requisites of educational development were economic, social, cultural, and political. In the light of this observation the conference urged African countries to spend efforts in improving Adult Education, Non-Formal Education (or Out-of-School Education), and Teacher Education. Basic Education should be linked to life-long education and University education should be made relevant to the needs of their respective societies. Further every type of education offered should make an effort to link the school to the community and to working life.

The recommendations of the Lagos Conference dealt with the following points:

1. Greater priority to Research and Education for economic development.

2. Use of Local resources for the production of teaching equipment.

3. Education should make students employable.

4. Middle-level skills and related technological subjects should be introduced into the secondary school curriculum.

5. Schools should be organized in such a way that they become self-managed and self-financed units.

6. Education should be democratized so that schooling may cease to be the privilege of a few children.

7. Educational planning should be part of the country's overall economic and social planning.

8. National languages should be developed and used as media of instruction.

9. Efforts should be made to train handicapped children and teachers of the handicapped.

THE TREND OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE 1970's

It would be realised that the 1960's was a period for the recognition of the importance of education in economic, social and political growth. Attempts were made, especially at the

Addis Ababa conference of 1961, to provide the basis for quantitative planning of education. In general however not much was done to improve the quality and relevance of education until the 1970. Much of the formal education offered during colonial times was of course not relevant to the respective countries. The Phelps-Stokes Commission which toured schools in some West African countries in 1920 and 1921 made the following observation: "If the pupils were asked to sing any song they pleased, the chances were strong that we would hear 'The British Grenadiers'..... when they were asked to sing an African song, a boat song, or any chant used in their own plays, a laugh invariably went through the whole class.....Similarly, if we asked about History, we soon discovered what happened in 1066, but of their own history - nothing".

Issues of the relevance and the quality of education, examinations, textbooks etc. did not assume much importance in the decade immediately after independence. Considerations of relevance and quality were to be taken up in 1970's. It should however be realized that the education malaise of the 1960's was not a problem of the developing countries alone, but of the developed ones as well. It was this state of affairs which led to the convening of an International Conference on the World Crisis in Education (Williamberg, Virginia, U.S.A. 1976) one of the outcomes of which was Phillip Coomb's book: The World Crisis in Education. What was required, therefore, of the international community was to make a global and concerted study of the objectives and procedure of educaiton in the contemporary world. UNESCO made its own contribution to this effort by taking the lead in organising in 1970 an International Education Year which prompted fresh thinking and innovation in a large number of countries and, at the same time, made a preliminary appraisal of the situation at the international level. As a logical follow-up

to this action, the Director-General of UNESCO, appointed a seven-man International Commission on the Development of Education, under the chairmanship of Mr. Edgar Faure in 1971. The Commission's report, Learning to Be, on the basis of its reading of the present state of education throughout the world, indicated the main lines along which education should be redirected in confirmity with its new functions and goals. The approach to education put forward in Learning To Be owes a great deal to the concept of "Life-long Education". The concept of "Life-long Education" adopts a broad and functional view of education - a view that equates education not simply with "schooling" but with "learning", regardless of where or how the learning takes place. Seen in this perspective, education is obviously a life-long process spanning the years from earliest infancy through old age and taking many different forms only one of which is formal schooling.

The call for life-long education in Africa has mainly taken the form of Adult Education either for simple literacy or for vocational and professional training. One of the regional programmes for adult professional training is the Pan African Institute for Development based at Buea and Yaounde in the Republic of The Cameroon. The Institute offers management training programmes in Rural Development for government officials and private persons all over Africa. For adult literacy there is the Afrolit organisation based in Nairobi which offers advisory services to national adult literacy programmes in Africa. Also based in Nairobi is the African Adult Education Association. The Association comprises of national adult education associations in 16 African countries, 41 affiliated institutions and about 300 individual members. The objectives of the association are to arrange conferences, seminars, work-shops, and study-tours on adult education problems and issues in contemporary Africa. The association further plans programmes for the training of adult

educators and also encourages and offers advisory services to national associations on the organisation of conferences, seminars courses, etc. Also included in the category of life-long education programmes is the large number of youth education programmes existing in virtualy all African nations.

With respect to the training of curriculum specialists for the formal education sector mention should be made again of the African Curricular Organisation (ACO) which was formally established in 1976. The ACO is presently made up of over 20 countries represented by their national curriculum centres. purpose of the ACO is to strengthen expertise in curriculum development, research, and evaluation in Africa. To achieve this, the ACO in conjunction with the Kenya Institute of Education, and the University of Nairobi, has mounted a post-graduate course in systematic curriculum development for training the staff and associated members of national curriculum centres. The course is based in Nairobi and is a bilateral project between the Kenya Government and the German Government with the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) as the implementary agency for the German Government. The course leads to an award of the Post Graduate Diploma in Curriculum Development by the University of Nairobi. It is expected that curriculum specialists trained through the ACO programme will be some of the agents for making qualitative improvements in the school curriculum of their respective countries.

There are still other regional educational programmes which have been concerned with qualitative improvements in African education since the 1970's. Two of such programmes are the African Social Studies Programme (ASSP) based in Nairobi, and the Science Education Programme for Africa (SEPA) based in Accra.

The ASSP is composed up of 16 countries, represented by their Ministries of Education or curriculum centres. The major objectives of the ASSP are to make qualitative improvements in the teaching of social studies in schools and in the improvement of materials for teaching and learning. SEPA, on the other hand, has a post-graduate course for Science educators based at Njala University in Sierra Leone, and is also concerned with the development of science teaching methods and science teaching materials for African schools.

A more recent attempt at qualitative curriculum reform has been the development of environmental education programmes as part of the school curriculum. The environment became important in the 1960's when it was realized that the physical environment was being affected by hazards such as pollution arising out of industrial growth in the developed countries. It was later realized that there are a lot of other environmental problems due to under-development. The lack of adequate sanitation in developing countries, health problems, malnutrition, unsafe drinking water supplies, food shortages, and the consequent desertification due to the cutting down of trees for firewood etc are all problems associated with poverty, ignorance, and under-development. It has been realized that the solution to these problems is not only with the application of Science and Technology, but also lies principally with education in order to provide people with knowledge, attitudinal changes, and a positive committment to improve the quality of their environment. The International Environmental Education Programme, a joint programme of Unesco and UNEP, has developed a programme on the nature, role and objectives of environmental education as a basis for developing environmental education programmes as part of the school curriculum.

areas, and there is thirdly community development programmes carried out by the Government Ministries for Education, Social Welfare, and Community Development.

A lot has been done and achieved within the 1970s to improve the quality and relevance of curriculum content both within the formal school system and within the non-formal educational system. Some of the issues which are now engaging the attention of educators and curriculum developers are text book and instructional material production, use of local languages for instruction, educational financing, apppropriate teaching methods and strategies, and the critical issue of providing the right type of knowledge and skills as one of the solutions to stem the tide of unemployable school leavers.

CONCLUSION

African Nations emerging from colonial rule were determined to translate into practical policy the aspirations of their peoples. Education was hence seen as the effective weapon in the fight against illiteracy and ignorance and a lever for overall economic and social progress and, as such, was to be given the highest priority in national development programmes.

The task of the Addis Ababa Conference was to make an outline of an Educational Development Plan aimed at providing economic growth and social progress in African countries. What the Addis Ababa conference achieved instead was to create an awareness among African nations on the low levels of their literacy rates and the need to make effective plans for increased quantitative

output from the school system. Later in the late 1960s and in the 1970s they developed a great concern in all African countries about the quality and relevance of education to the socio-economic and cultural aspirations of African peoples. The problems that have been encountered in this endeavour are essentially those that have been disucssed above and which underlie the dysfunctionality of the educational system. These problems have given rise to the increasing scepticism that investment in education is not producing the desired results.

The whole purpose of education and its objectives as well as its quality and relevance are hence being critisized and continuously reviewed. This scepticism is providing justification, in some countries, for the restriction on the further expansion of the primary school system and a rigid control on the number of children that go on from the primary schools to the secondary school - a situation which has rendered the attainment of the targets of the Addis Ababa Plan difficult if not impossible.

There is concern about what happens to the many young boys and girls who complete the primary school course and cannot go on to the secondary schools, to those who drop out before completing the primary school or worse still, about the many boys and girls, particularly in the rural areas, who do not go to school at all.

There is increasing anxiety among African leaders, that the high hopes expressed at Addis Ababa, and the great expectations and "near-faith" of the African peoples in the "magic of education" to transform economic and human conditons for the better are fast turning into bitter disillusionment.

As everywhere in the world, questions are being asked as to the final aims of education, the concepts underlying programmes and

methods, the place and role of education in development, and also what contribution education can make to strengthening national independence and safeguarding the original cultural identity of each nation within the context of African unity and solidarity.

So, if the Decade of the 'Sixties' was one of aspirations and great expectations leading to the quantitative expansion of the African educational system, the Decade of the 'Senventies' was one of sober reflection and exploratory action leading to the renovation of education in Africa. It is important to bear in mind that education is mainly a social business, and like society itself, it is not static, it is a dynamic process concerned with both social and personal experiences, which require analysis, selection, reflection and continuous evaluation.

In our reflection it is important to always remember that, Education can only be understood when we know for WHAT SOCIETY and for WHAT SOCIAL POSITION the pupils are being educated. Viewed in this context, the process of education is considered too important to be left entirely in the hands of educators alone, that any genuine efforts to regenerate education in Africa must involve not only classroom teachers, but also educational planners and policy-makers (in various Government ministries), parents and guardians of children, community leaders (in particular leaders of the various religious bodies who are proprietors of the majority of educational institutions), as well as those whose work and research directly or indirectly relate to education - formal, informal and non-formal because if ever any study was interdisciplinary, it is education.

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FURTHER READING

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Some of the titles will be available in other languages as well.

You are not expected to read all or any of these documents; however, some of them will certainly be helpful in completing your assignments.

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